

FEATURES

A Big Raise, A Promotion, Or...

by W. Scott Cameron

I recently got an e-mail requesting nominations for our 11th Capital Management Leadership and Mastery (L&M) Award program. This program recognizes capital management practitioners in project management, construction management, capital purchasing, facilities engineering, design management, capital finance, and initiative management for their functional leadership and mastery throughout their career.

This e-mail caused me to reflect on how organizations recognize peoples' contributions in traditional (pay and promotion) and non-traditional ways (recognition, etc.). I was fortunate to be chosen as the project manager of the first L&M program. As our company's Capital Management Organization matured, we discovered we had a lot of experts in various capital management functions who we wanted to recognize but were limited as to how to do that within our traditional pay and progression programs. Thus, the stage was set to explore new ways to recognize individuals and their contributions.

A team of project managers, including myself, evaluated a number of recognition programs and proposed our own to recognize individuals within the disciplines noted above. Our objectives were clear:

- Establish a program where there were no winners and losers, only award recipients.
- Get Capital Management practitioners and their hierarchy to view the program as a positive development.
- Establish simple nominating criteria. Nominees had to have demonstrated sustained technical mastery and leadership in ways that led to significant contributions to their business areas.
- Limit the number of award recipients so that getting an award would be regarded as something special.

We proposed an awards luncheon where each award recipient would receive a plaque commemorating their achievements in front of their peers and hierarchy. Hierarchy agreed to this proposal.

Thus, the process began:

- Nominations were requested and received.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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- Nomination Committee reviewed nominations and recommended award recipients.
- Award recipients and their hierarchy were informed of their selection.
- Invitations to the luncheon and awards presentation were sent out to all practitioners.
- Luncheon and award presentation were held on schedule within cost.

Everything was going along as planned until the day of the luncheon when something totally caught me off guard. I knew each of the award recipients but on the day of the luncheon I noticed I had never seen each of them so happy in all the time I had known them. As I talked to each of them, I learned how much it meant to be recognized by their peers.



I've attended each L&M celebration and been involved in managing other recognition events. The one thing that continually stands out in my mind in all of these occasions is the happiness of each individual on being recognized by his or her peers.

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A Big Raise, A Promotion, Or... (cont'd)

By being a participant in the formation of this recognition event and watching it flourish over the years, I feel I have had a rare opportunity to better understand how important it is to individuals to be recognized for their accomplishments throughout their careers. It is easy to become cynical about traditional and non-traditional rewards and recognition programs. However, as we continue to raise the bar on what we expect out of our project managers, we need to look for new and exciting ways to celebrate not only their team's successes but also their individual success.